

RNA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Spring 2026 | January 22, 2026

RNA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER: SPRING 2026

We are excited to bring you the first RNA Society Newsletter of 2026! In this issue, our President Fátima Gebauer and CEO Kristian Baker invite you to join the programming of our Society, including the newly established "RNA for All" initiative and the RNA Infographics Contest. We look back on RNA 2025 and get excited for the upcoming 31st RNA Society Annual Meeting in Montréal. Celebrating the excellence and diversity of the RNA Society members, we announce the RNA Society 2026 Award Winners and promote the many activities of our Society. We hope you enjoy the read.

See you in Montréal in May for RNA 2026!

Katarína Juríková, Newsletter Editor

Daniel Kim, Media & Communications Committee Chair



UPCOMING EVENT: RNA 2026



31st RNA Society Annual Meeting, May 26th– 31st, 2026

Oral abstract deadline (anticipated): Feb 28th, 2026

Poster abstract deadline (anticipated): March 31st, 2026

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FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Fátima Gebauer

Dear colleagues,

Albert Einstein once said 'If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.' The problem, I find, is that even if you understand it well enough, explaining it simply is not easy. And in these times where misinformation spreads at the speed of light, where (RNA) science is increasingly questioned, and where the public rightly demands transparency and understanding of science-based decisions, strengthening our communication and outreach capacity has never been more important.

In this regard, the RNA Society has recently launched two initiatives. The RNA Infographic Contest, promoted by the Education Committee and led by Manny Ares, aims to obtain visually engaging posters explaining RNA science and its applications. On the other hand, the 'RNA for All' Initiative, spearheaded by Kehinde Ross – Chair of the DEI Committee – in collaboration with the Education Committee, aims to expand RNA science awareness to the wider community, including those outside academia. Together, these efforts are expected to foster public understanding of RNA science.

Regarding outreach capacity, we have recently appointed Sean Ryder as Director of Outreach within the Education Committee. In addition to his career as an RNA researcher, Sean is author of the book 'Everyday RNA: The future of RNA Medicine' and brings extensive experience in science outreach. He is keen to support the RNA Society in developing collaborations with other organizations and professional societies to help members of our Society interested in strengthening their communication and

advocacy skills.

I encourage members with an interest in these areas to contact him at RNA outreach@rnasociety.org.



I invite you to review in the pages of this newsletter and the address of our CEO, Kristian Baker, other important highlights of our current programming including our Annual Meeting, our community programs and more. These updates reflect the breath of activities underway across the Society and the continued commitment of our members and leadership.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the outgoing members of the Board of Directors – Neva Caliskan, Tsutomu Suzuki and Aaron Hoskins – for their dedication and valuable contributions during the past term. I am also pleased to welcome our incoming Board members – Phil Bevilacqua, Atlanta Cook and Amanda Hargrove – and look forward to working with them as they help shape the future direction of the Society.

Enjoy the reading and see you all soon in Montréal!

Best regards,

Fátima Gebauer
President of the RNA Society

FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

Kristian Baker

I began my term as CEO of the RNA Society on January 1st, 2020, after serving for several years as Chair of the Membership Committee. I was both excited and a bit nervous to take on the role and its many responsibilities – and, like us all – I had no idea what was about to unfold. The COVID-19 pandemic would soon upend the Society and RNA science in ways none of us could have imagined. Looking back, I can say without hesitation that – thanks to the extraordinary dedication of our many volunteers – the RNA Society emerged from those early days stronger, more global, and more engaged with the RNA research community than ever. We have expanded our programming and deepened our community involvement, all with the goal of better meeting the scientific and professional needs of our members.

If you are a new member, or if you haven't visited the RNA Society website recently, I'd like to take a moment to highlight the wide range of programs and benefits available today to YOU – our members.

Exceptional value for sharing your science – members receive substantial discounts no matter how they choose to share their discoveries: a 28% discount (a value of \$1,450) on open-access publication of your research in RNA, the Society's flagship journal, as well as subsidized registration to attend our Annual Meeting – representing savings of \$200–\$300. When combined with our Research Presentation Fellowships (which provide full meeting registration fee waivers) and our Childcare, Dependent Care and Disability Allowance Program, our Annual Meeting is more accessible than ever.

Expanded outreach and communication to keep you in the know – we have broadened our e-mail and social media presence – Twitter/X

(@RNASociety), BlueSky (@rnasociety.bsky.social) and LinkedIn (The RNA Society Group) – to keep you up to date on Society activities and major developments in RNA research (including promoting newly accepted papers and their Graphical Abstracts through our RNA journal Social Media accounts – @RNAjournal and The RNA Society Journal on LinkedIn). Our biannual Newsletter now features a refreshed design and updated content, and will soon be joined by our modernized, revamped website that will debut later this spring (be sure to check it out and take it for a test drive!).

Increased community programs to get you involved – Our RNA Salon program continues to grow, now supporting more than 70 locations and empowering local RNA research and collaboration around the globe. The newly launched RNA for All Initiative puts you in the driver's seat to create and deliver community outreach in RNA science and education. We also invite members to showcase their creative side through our RNA Society RNA Day Art & Baking Contest and our current RNA Infographic Contest (both with cash prizes)!



FROM THE DESK OF THE CEO

Kristian Baker

Promoting RNA education and your professional development – RNA Society programming at our Annual Meeting now includes expert panel discussion sessions, a pre-meeting Workshop, Meet the RNA journal Editor opportunities, and our renowned Mentoring Dinner. These offerings are complemented by a year-long Mentoring Program; practical advice from colleagues through our bi-monthly Member Spotlight Series; online research seminars through our partnership with the RNA Collaborative; webinars hosted by our RNA Society Junior Scientists Group; and access to our job board (visit it here: <https://www.rnasociety.org/employment-opportunities>).

Recognition for your excellence – we have expanded our Awards Program to honor members at all career stages and to recognize leadership, mentorship, inclusivity and teaching. We have also significantly increased the number of Poster Presentation Prizes awarded at our Annual Meeting (now with more than 50 prizes – thanks Moderna!) and offer a Speaker Referral List to help you identify outstanding colleagues for seminars, panels and committees.

Phew – as you can see, there is truly a great deal happening in YOUR RNA Society, and we hope you take full advantage of everything it has to offer. If you haven't yet renewed your RNA Society membership for 2026, now is the time. New membership categories are better aligned with career stage, and discounts are available for RNA Salon participants, 2025 RNA journal authors, and those choosing multi-year memberships. However you look at it, the RNA Society offers exceptional value and one of the most welcoming and vibrant scientific communities around.

So... despite the challenging start to my term, it has been my absolute pleasure to help grow and guide this remarkable organization over the last six years. I look forward to all the fresh ideas and new initiatives planned for our members in 2026!

See you in Montréal in May!

Kristian Baker

CEO of the RNA Society

RECAP OF RNA 2025 & FUTURE RNA SOCIETY MEETINGS

Adrian Ferré-D'Amaré

Our 2025 Annual Meeting in San Diego was in high demand despite political events that disrupted plans for many. Because of these ongoing happenings, participation in the San Diego meeting was unusually heavily skewed toward US-based scientists. Nonetheless, total attendance was in line with those of previous meetings. A big thank you to organizers Katrin Karbstein (Lead), Atlanta Cook, Anita Corbett, Jorgen Kjems and Zefeng Wang. As in the past, the Society awarded Research Presentation Fellowships and Childcare, Dependent Care & Disability Allowances. The Society will continue these two popular membership benefits for future meetings. If you plan to apply, please note that these two programs have deadlines that are earlier than registration and abstracts deadlines.



RNA 2026, the 31st Annual Meeting of the RNA Society, will be held in Montréal, Canada at the Palais des Congrès, from May 26th to 31st, 2026. The organizers are Julie Claycomb (University of Toronto, Co-lead), Eric Léculier (Institut de Recherches Cliniques de Montréal, Co-lead), Anita Corbet (Emory University), Rotem Karni (Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania), Tsutomu (Tom) Suzuki (University of Tokyo), and Mihaela Zavolan (Biozentrum, University of Basel).

The RNA Society Board of Directors has also approved

the venue for the 2027 meeting: mark your calendars and plan to attend the 32nd Annual Meeting of the RNA Society from June 8th to 13th in Strasbourg, France!



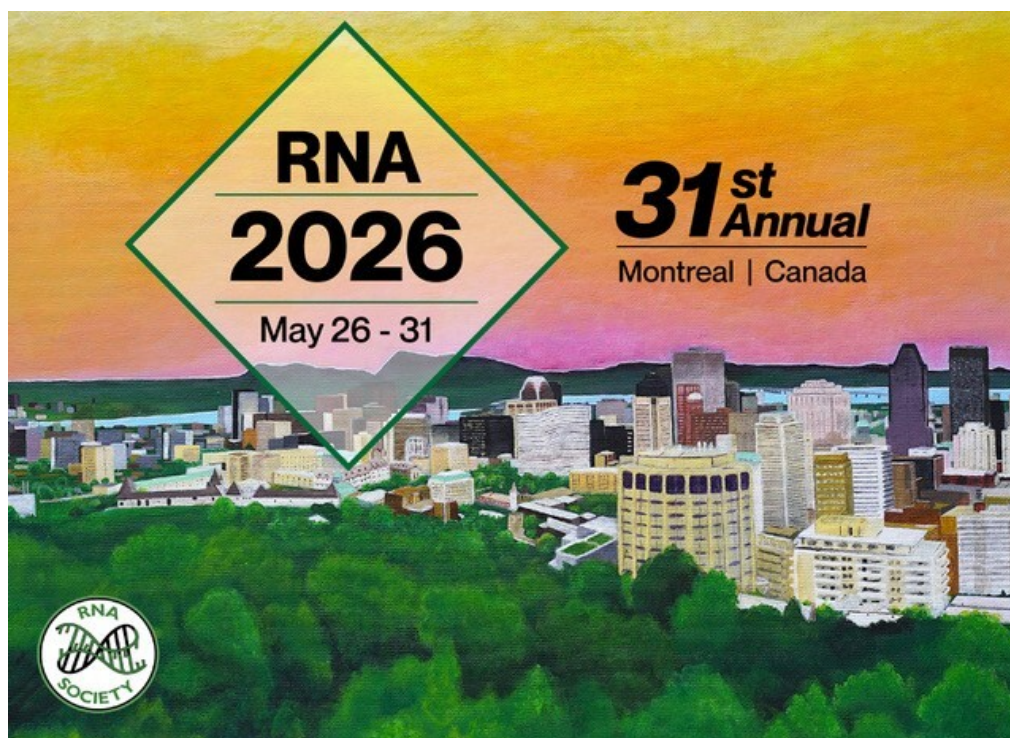
I am very grateful to members of the Meetings Committee for their contributions and insights in helping select future meeting venues, organizers and Research Presentation Fellowships for our meetings. Current members of the committee are Juan Alfonzo, Frédéric Allain, Yoseph Barash, Malik Chaker-Margot, Ming Hammond, Toshie Kai, Gracjan Michlewski, Danny Nedialkova and Woan-Yuh Tarn. For RNA Society members who wish to serve a 4-year term on this committee, there will be an open call for volunteers later this year.

Adrian Ferré-D'Amaré

Chair of the Meetings Committee

RNA 2026

31ST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RNA SOCIETY



The RNA 2026 Organizing Committee is working diligently to bring you a spectacular 31st Annual Meeting of the RNA Society in Montréal, Canada! This year's meeting will be held at the Palais des Congrès de Montréal (<https://congresmtl.com/en/>) in cosmopolitan downtown Montréal, a location that is truly at the heart of a vibrant, welcoming, and energetic city. The conference centre provides a dynamic and cohesive interaction space to foster formal and informal interactions, and it is centrally located near restaurants, tourist attractions, charming streets, and the historic waterfront, allowing attendees to explore and enjoy the rich culture and history of this beautiful city together. The meeting organizers are: Julie Claycomb (University of Toronto, Canada; co-lead organizer); Eric Lécuyer

(Institut de Recherches Cliniques de Montréal (IRCM/Montréal Clinical Research Institute, Canada; co-lead organizer); Anita Corbett (Emory University, USA); Rotem Karni (University of Pennsylvania, USA); Tsutomu Suzuki (University of Tokyo, Japan); and Mihaela Zavolan (University of Basel, Switzerland), and the team has enlisted a fantastic roster of additional scientific committee members to shape the oral sessions. The meeting will feature three outstanding Keynote Speakers that showcase the breadth of RNA biology you will experience when attending the meeting: Archa Fox (University of Western Australia, Australia) Jørgen Kjems (Aarhus University, Denmark), and Nahum Sonenberg (McGill University, Canada).

RNA 2026

31ST ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RNA SOCIETY

Beyond the Keynote Speakers, both the 2025 (Dr. David Tollervy) and 2026 (To Be Named) RNA Society Lifetime Achievement in Science winners will share their experiences and insights on their lives and careers immersed in RNA biology, and there will be a pre-meeting Workshop hosted by Oxford Nanopore on long-read RNA sequencing. Cuisine, culture, history, oodles of RNA, and of course, a Canadian favourite poutine: join us in Montréal and experience all that RNA 2026 has to offer!

Please visit the RNA 2026 meeting website <https://www2.rnasociety.org/> for more information, including how to apply for support from the RNA Society Research Presentation Fellowship and Childcare, Dependent Care and Disability Allowance programs.

Save the dates:

- Registration for RNA 2026 will open in late January 2026
- Abstract deadlines (anticipated):
 - Oral presentations:
February 28th, 2026
 - Poster presentations:
March 31st, 2026

On behalf of the organizers of RNA 2026

Julie M. Claycomb

Eric Lécuyer

2026 AWARDS OF THE RNA SOCIETY



2026 RNA Society Early-Career Research Award

Dr. Ryan Flynn (Harvard University, USA)

2026 RNA Society Mid-Career Research Award

Dr. Sebastian Leidel (University of Bern, Switzerland)

2026 Elisa Izaurralde Award for Innovation in Research, Teaching, and Service

Dr. Selene Fernandez-Valverde (University of New South Wales, Australia)

2026 RNA Society Moderna Award for Biomedical Innovation in RNA

Dr. Can Cenik (The University of Texas at Austin, USA)

2026 RNA Society / Scaringe Young Scientist Award

Graduate Student Winner: *Stephen Tang (Columbia University, USA)*

Post-doctoral Fellow Winner: *Dr. Joseph Lobel (University of California, Berkeley, USA)*

2026 AWARDS OF THE RNA SOCIETY



2026 Eclipse Award for Innovation in High Throughput Biology

Graduate Student Winner:

Patrick Bohn (Helmholtz Center for RNA-based Infection Research, Germany)

Post-doctoral Fellow Winner:

Dr. Luca Ducoli (Stanford University, USA)

2026 RNA Society / CSHL Press Distinguished Research Mentor Award

Dr. Karin Musier-Forsyth (Ohio State University, USA)

2026 RNA Society / CSHL Press Award for Research Excellence by an Underrepresented Scientist

Dr. Sarah Pierce (Broad Institute, USA)

2026 RNA Society Award for Excellence in Inclusive Leadership

James Robson (Boston University, USA)

2026 RNA Society Outstanding Career Researcher

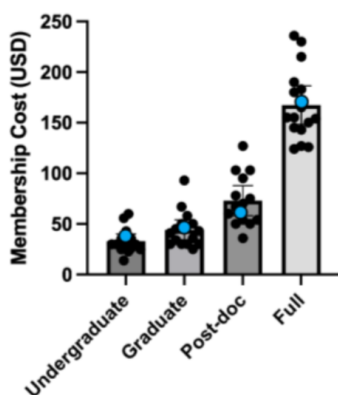
Joseph Aruscavage (University of Utah, USA)

FROM THE DESK OF THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR

Kristin Koutmou

Meeting the needs of a growing RNA community

Interest in RNA science has surged over the last decade due to stunning basic-science discoveries and the promise of RNA based vaccines and therapeutics. Reflecting this growth in the field, RNA Society membership has increased by more than 65% since 2015. Concurrently, to continue meeting our growing community's needs, Society programming has vastly expanded beyond the RNA journal and annual meeting. This year the RNA Society implemented its first membership dues increase in 15 years and expanded trainee membership options. Even with this adjustment, our commitment to high-quality programming and community at competitive prices sets the RNA Society apart. A survey of similarly sized scientific societies across four continents found that average fees increased by over 30% in the past four years alone. Because the RNA Society is run by working scientists, a larger share of our revenue supports programming rather than overhead, keeping us closely aligned with the needs of our vibrant community.



Survey of membership fees for 15 international scientific societies demonstrates the competitiveness of the 2026 RNA Society dues (blue).

Over the past year your membership supported a wide range of local and international programs. We continue to support the



monthly RNA Collaborative Seminar Series (second Wednesday of each month) to highlight emerging research and strengthen global connections. For a decade we have partnered with Lexogen to fund local RNA Salons and last year there were over 70 sites reaching more than 7,000 researchers worldwide. We awarded \$20,000 in Small Meetings Sponsorships to support 17 events in nine countries, and our individualized mentoring program facilitated 28 mentor-mentee pairings in 2025 alone. These programs all grew from grassroots member initiatives – thank you for building an amazing organization!

We also continue to celebrate your accomplishments. Nearly 200 members received an award or financial support from the RNA Society over the past year, and ~30 were featured in our Spotlight series. We have much to celebrate. In 2026 we look forward to continuing to engage members across the world and to foster the diverse perspectives that will drive the next breakthroughs in RNA science. Together we are shaping the future of RNA research.

FROM THE DESK OF THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CHAIR


Kristin Koutmou

Connect with fellow members at the RNA Society Annual Meeting in Montréal, Canada (www2.rnasociety.org), and learn more about membership benefits and ways to get involved at rnasociety.org.

Kristin Koutmou
Chair of the Membership Committee



Award winners and participants at six meetings supported by RNA Society Small Meetings Sponsorship program: (top row) Rustbelt, Rocky Mountain RNA Symposium, RNA Society of Sweden, and BARC; (bottom row) NYC Symposium and RiboMod.



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of manuscript transfers (with reviews)

Prompt manuscript handling –
an average of 73 days
from submission to acceptance

New RNA Therapeutics Section led by
~ Michelle Hastings ~

RNA SOCIETY INFOGRAPHICS CONTEST

RNA SOCIETY INFOGRAPHICS CONTEST!




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GRAPHIC ABOUT
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Alberta RNA Research and Training Institute



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